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R 301647Z SEP 80
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5053
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
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AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY DG
25 JUN 1982
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KINGSTON 7251

E.O. 12065: NA
TAGS: PINT, JM
SUBJECT: POLL REVEALS VOTERS' MAJOR CONCERNS

REF: KINGSTON 7098

1. (U) THE DAILY GLEANER BEGAN ON SEPTEMBER 28 TO PUBLISH THE RESULTS OF A PUBLIC OPINION POLL CONDUCTED BY DR. CARL STONE, THE MOST INFLUENTIAL POLLSTER IN JAMAICA. THE PAPER PLANS TO PUBLISH THE ANSWERS TO A SERIES OF QUESTIONS POSED TO 1,964 JAMAICANS FROM ALL THIRTEEN PARISHES, FROM SEPTEMBER 5-14.

2. (U) THE FIRST PART OF THE POLL POSED " AS THE ELECTIONS DRAW NEAR, BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN CRITICIZING EACH OTHER AND TALKING ABOUT A NUMBER OF ISSUES. WHAT IN YOUR OPINION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE, CONCERN, OR QUESTION IN THE COMING ELECTIONS." STONE DIVIDED HIS RESPONDENTS INTO THREE CATEGORIES: THOSE FROM KINGSTON CORPORATE AREA, THOSE FROM TOWNS IN OTHER PARISHES, AND THOSE FROM RURAL DISTRICTS. FOR ALL RESPONDENTS, UNEMPLOYMENT RANKED AS THE MAJOR ISSUE (25.8 PERCENT, 24.8 PERCENT, AND 20.9 PERCENT, RESPECTIVELY). CRIME AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE RANKED SECOND AMONG CORPORATE AREA RESPONDENTS (22.8 PERCENT), WHILE THE OTHER GROUPS RANKED VIOLENCE FOURTH AND FIFTH. ECONOMIC RECOVERY WAS LISTED THIRD BY KINGSTON PARTICIPANTS, BUT IT RANKED SECOND IN

THE OTHER TWO AREAS. FOOD SHORTAGES PLACED THIRD AMONG THOSE OUTSIDE THE CORPORATE AREA, BUT PLACED EIGHTH IN THE CITY, INDICATING THAT THE RECENT INCREASE IN HERETOFORE SCARCE ITEM IN KINGSTON SUPERMARKETS HAS HAD SOME AEFFECT ON THE POPULACE'S CONCERN.

3. (U) FOR THE CITY DWELLER, DEFENDING SOCIALISM RANKED

FOURTH (7.5 PERCENT) AMONG CONCERNS, BUTH THE TOWN DWELLER PLACED IT FIFTH (5.8 PERCENT)
AND THE RURAL RESIDENT PLACED IT SEVENTH (4 PERCENT). OF MORE CONCERN TO THE LATTER WAS COMMUNISM, WHILE THOSE IN THE CITY AND TOWNS PUT COMMUNISM AS A WEAK SEVENTH.

4. (LOU: COMMENT:) ISSUES ARE OF LESS IMPORTANCE IN JAMAICA THAN TRADITIONAL PARTY LOYALTIES, EXPECTATIONS OF REWARD, AND PERSONALITIES. HENCE, THE POLL ON THIS QUESTION IS NOT A CLEAR INDICATION OF HOW JAMAICANS WILL VOTE. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS AN IMPORTANT UNCOMMITTED SEGMENT OF THE ELECTRATE AND THE JLP HAD A RECEPTIVE AUDIENCE THERE AND, TO A LESSER DEGREE, AMONG SOME TRADITIONAL PNP SUPPORTERS, FOR ITS ATTACKS ON PNP MISMANAGEMENT OF THE ECONOMY. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PNP RHETORICAL EMPHASIS ON DEFENDING SOCIALISM WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE IT'S APPEAL TO JAMAICAN VOTERS OTHER

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